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THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN MARTIN COUNTY PROVIDES EXTENSIVE HEPATITIS A OUTREACH



Health Department staff vaccinate 765 adults this week

Contact:

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Martin County, FL – The Health Department in Martin County is urging good handwashing and vaccination to stop the spread of hepatitis A in the community. From April 15-18, the Florida Department of Health provided approximately 765 hepatitis A vaccinations to uninsured, underinsured and at-risk adults.

The hepatitis A vaccine is available in the community via health care providers and local pharmacies. Beginning Monday, April 22 the Florida Department of Health in Martin County will transition from walk-in hepatitis A vaccinations to scheduled appointments for uninsured, underinsured and at-risk adults (ages 19 and older). Appointments are available by calling: 772-221-4000 and pressing option 4 for Clinic Services/Appointments.

The Health Department has confirmed 19 cases of hepatitis A in Martin County and 3 deaths associated with complications from the virus. Utilizing local, regional and state resources, the Health Department is conducting an extensive investigation to pinpoint common links. Preliminary findings show there have been multiple introductions of the hepatitis A virus into Martin County, with no common or single source for the transmission of the virus, which is consistent with the person to person spread seen in outbreaks nationwide. Tissue samples from the three deceased were sent to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for further evaluation to determine the strain of the hepatitis A virus and the analysis is expected to take several weeks.

General Information:

Hepatitis A is a vaccine-preventable liver disease. While normally not fatal, persons with chronic disease, compromised immune systems and the elderly are more likely to experience a severe illness, leading to liver failure and possible death.

Anyone experiencing symptoms of hepatitis A, including fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, dark urine, diarrhea, clay colored bowel movements, joint pain and jaundice (yellow skin/eyes) should contact their healthcare provider immediately for evaluation and testing.

Since January 2018 there have been more than 1,300 confirmed cases of Hepatitis A statewide. The Florida Department of Health considers a community "high risk" when the confirmed number of cases reaches 5. Martin County reached high risk status with 5 confirmed cases as of Monday, April 1.

Additional Resources:

The Florida Department of Health has launched an information line, email box and a website to address general questions about Hepatitis A.

- **Hepatitis A, Information Line:**
1-844-CALL-DOH (1-844-225-5364) available Monday – Friday, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm

- **Website:** www.Floridahealth.gov/hepa
- **Email questions:** HepA@flhealth.gov

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on Twitter at [@GoHealthyMartin](#) and on [Facebook](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit www.MartinCountyHealth.com

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